

TS# 142091-g

16 May 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: SNIE 11-7-60: SOVIET CAPABILITIES AND INTENTIONS
WITH RESPECT TO THE CLANDESTINE
INTRODUCTION OF WEAPONS OF MASS
DESTRUCTION INTO THE US

1. This estimate was requested by the NSC Planning Board.
2. The estimate can be summed up in three points:
 - a. The USSR is unlikely to resort to this form of attack except possibly in connection with a deliberate Soviet initiation of nuclear general war, which we have estimated to be unlikely.
 - b. In that unlikely case, the USSR might consider a clandestine nuclear attack on SAC to be worth the risk.
 - c. However, when the USSR achieves a substantial ICBM capability, there will be nothing to be gained by clandestine attack that would be worth the risk.
3. On 6 May the draft text was fully agreed at the working level except for the FBI footnote distributed under separate cover. This footnote is a rewrite of paragraph 4 to generally the same effect with two additional points:

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a. A rhetorical opening to the effect that, as long as a clandestine attack capability exists, it must be regarded as a danger.

b. The USSR will not achieve a "decisive military capability" with ICBMs within the foreseeable future.

(Note: this reference to "decisive military capability" establishes an unduly high criterion. The ICBM will virtually eliminate the marginal likelihood of clandestine attack long before a decisive ICBM capability is achieved.)

4. We are belatedly advised that General Breitweiser strongly objects to the inclusion of paragraphs 3 and 4 and any related discussion, on the ground that these matters are none of our business. One cannot estimate Soviet intentions in this regard without considering the matters which he would eliminate. To delete paragraphs 3 and 4 would be to delete the estimate.

5. On 16 May a cleanup session was held to consider certain objections raised by General Breitweiser. In brief, the General wants to eliminate paragraphs 3 and 4 in the conclusions and all related discussion, apparently because he wishes to give no countenance whatsoever to even a remote possibility of a clandestine attack on SAC. To delete these paragraphs would be to delete the substance of the estimate.

6. The Joint Staff proposals were not supported at the clean-up session and were not accepted. However, a number of changes for clarification were made and a change sheet has been disseminated.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:

ABBOT SMITH
Acting Chairman